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Barkley and Kentucky Lakes to Stay at Summer Pool Levels until July 15

NASHVILLE, TENN., (March 28, 2005) - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) will extend the summer pool elevations for the canal-linked Lake Barkley and Kentucky Lakes for 2005 and 2006. This change will hold summer pool levels at elevation 359 for an additional 30 days from the original lake elevation schedule.

The original lake elevation schedule, called a guide curve, experienced a 15 day extension in 1980. The change being implemented for 2005 and 2006 will add an additional 15 days to the adjustment made in 1980. In effect, pleasure boaters and fishermen will see summer pool water levels until 15 July. Normal draw-down procedures will be used to return lake elevations to winter pool by 1 December. Barring an unforeseen flooding event, no water will be released through the flood gates. Lake levels will be lowered by passing the water through hydroelectric power generating turbines.

Over the years many requests have been made by the public to extend summer pool elevations and a 'stairstepped' drawdown was tried on the lakes in both 1994 and 1996. Higher lake elevations will improve water-related recreational opportunities during the second half of

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the summer. While most recreational boaters, marina operators and lake resort owners would like to see water levels stay at summer pool through early September, competing demands on the water resources won't allow it on these two Western Kentucky Lakes. Flood control, a congressionally authorized purpose, could be adversely affected by the change.

Barkley Dam was authorized in the River and Harbor Act of 1954 as a multiple-purpose project designed for flood control, navigation, and hydropower. The lock passes about 9 million tons of cargo annually. The dam has prevented more than \$72 million in flood damage since it was completed in 1964. In 2004, the generators at Barkley Dam generated more than 884,000,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity with a resulting net revenue of more than \$3.4 million.

Two additional purposes for which Lake Barkley is managed are recreation and fish and wildlife. The project was first identified as the Lower Cumberland Project, but was later re-designated as Barkley Lock and Dam and Lake Barkley in honor of the late Alben W. Barkley, the 35th vice president of the United States and late senator and a Paducah, Kentucky native.

This change could have adverse environmental impacts on fish and wildlife habitats. At the end of the two year trial period, comments from stakeholders will be evaluated to determine if the extension of summer pool can be adopted on a permanent basis.